



**REPORT OF THE AUDITOR OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS
AUDIT EXAMINATION OF THE
MERCER COUNTY CLERK**

Calendar Year 2000

**EDWARD B. HATCHETT, JR.
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

AUDIT EXAMINATION OF THE MERCER COUNTY CLERK

Calendar Year 2000

The Auditor of Public Accounts has completed the Mercer County Clerk's audit for calendar year 2000. We have issued an unqualified opinion on the financial statement taken as a whole. Based upon the audit work performed, the financial statement is presented fairly in all material respects.

Financial Condition:

Revenues decreased by \$47,955 from the prior year and disbursements decreased by \$47,237 resulting in excess fees due the county of \$102,346.

Leases:

The County Clerk is committed to four lease agreements for copiers for a 60-month period. Outstanding balances as of December 31, 2000 were \$10,460, \$3,491, \$3,724 and \$2,937. The County Clerk is committed to a lease agreement for computer equipment for a 60-month period. The outstanding balance of this lease as of December 31, 2000 was \$34,896.

Deposits:

The Clerk's deposits were insured and collateralized by bank securities or bonds.

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EDWARD B. HATCHETT, JR.
AUDITOR OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

To the People of Kentucky

Honorable Paul E. Patton, Governor

T. Kevin Flanery, Secretary

Finance and Administration Cabinet

Dana Mayton, Secretary, Revenue Cabinet

Honorable Charles McGinnis, Mercer County Judge/Executive

Honorable Larry Short, Mercer County Clerk

Members of the Mercer County Fiscal Court

Independent Auditor's Report

We have audited the accompanying statement of receipts, disbursements, and excess fees of the County Clerk of Mercer County, Kentucky, for the year ended December 31, 2000. This financial statement is the responsibility of the County Clerk. Our responsibility is to express an opinion on this financial statement based on our audit.

We conducted our audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America, the standards applicable to financial audits contained in Government Auditing Standards issued by the Comptroller General of the United States, and the Audit Guide for County Fee Officials issued by the Auditor of Public Accounts, Commonwealth of Kentucky. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statement is free of material misstatement. An audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statement. An audit also includes assessing the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall financial statement presentation. We believe that our audit provides a reasonable basis for our opinion.

As described in Note 1, the County Clerk's office prepares the financial statement on a prescribed basis of accounting that demonstrates compliance with the modified cash basis and laws of Kentucky, which is a comprehensive basis of accounting other than generally accepted accounting principles. Accordingly, the accompanying financial statement is not intended to present financial position and results of operations in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

In our opinion, the financial statement referred to above presents fairly, in all material respects, the receipts, disbursements, and excess fees of the County Clerk for the year ended December 31, 2000, in conformity with the basis of accounting described above.

To the People of Kentucky
Honorable Paul E. Patton, Governor
T. Kevin Flanery, Secretary
Finance and Administration Cabinet
Dana Mayton, Secretary, Revenue Cabinet
Honorable Charles McGinnis, Mercer County Judge/Executive
Honorable Larry Short, Mercer County Clerk
Members of the Mercer County Fiscal Court

In accordance with Government Auditing Standards, we have also issued a report dated September 27, 2001, on our consideration of the County Clerk's internal control over financial reporting and on our tests of its compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, contracts, and grants. That report is an integral part of an audit performed in accordance with Government Auditing Standards and should be read in conjunction with this report in considering the results of our audit.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ed Hatchett", with a horizontal line extending from the end of the signature.

Edward B. Hatchett, Jr.
Auditor of Public Accounts

Audit fieldwork completed -
September 27, 2001

MERCER COUNTY
LARRY SHORT, COUNTY CLERK
STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS, DISBURSEMENTS, AND EXCESS FEES

Calendar Year 2000

Receipts

State Fees For Services	\$	8,202
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Fiscal Court		4,292
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Licenses and Taxes:

Motor Vehicle-

Licenses and Transfers	\$	490,267
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Usage Tax		1,707,594
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Tangible Personal Property Tax		1,429,765
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Licenses-

Marriage		5,106
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Deed Transfer Tax		57,462
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Delinquent Tax		127,949		3,818,143
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Fees Collected for Services:

Recordings-

Deeds, Easements, and Contracts	\$	14,705
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Real Estate Mortgages		32,159
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Chattel Mortgages and Financing Statements		56,551
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All Other Recordings		19,522
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Charges for Other Services-

Miscellaneous		15,663		138,600
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Interest Earned		5,652
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Gross Receipts	\$	3,974,889
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Disbursements

Payments to State:

Motor Vehicle-

Licenses and Transfers	\$	363,502
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Usage Tax		1,651,344
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Tangible Personal Property Tax		515,005
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Licenses, Taxes and Fees

Delinquent Tax		21,547
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Legal Process Tax		19,048	\$	2,570,446
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MERCER COUNTY
 LARRY SHORT, COUNTY CLERK
 STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS, DISBURSEMENTS, AND EXCESS FEES
 Calendar Year 2000
 (Continued)

Disbursements (Continued)

Payments to Fiscal Court:

Tangible Personal Property Tax	\$	91,842	
Delinquent Tax		13,277	
Deed Transfer Tax		<u>54,639</u>	\$ 159,758

Payments to Other Districts:

Tangible Personal Property Tax	\$	765,872	
Delinquent Tax		<u>54,510</u>	820,382

Payments to Sheriff 5,004

Payments to County Attorney 22,215

Operating Disbursements and Capital Outlay:

Personnel Services-			
Deputies Salaries	\$	162,203	
Extra Help		150	
Contracted Services-			
Advertising		15,185	
Printing and Binding		6,353	
Materials and Supplies-			
Office Supplies		14,449	

Other Charges-

Dues		1,312	
Postage		7,216	
Prepare Tax Bills		4,717	
Reimbursements		6,205	
Uncollected NSF Checks		3,207	

Capital Outlay-

Office Equipment		<u>5,205</u>	<u>226,202</u>
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Total Disbursements \$ 3,804,007

MERCER COUNTY
 LARRY SHORT, COUNTY CLERK
 STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS, DISBURSEMENTS, AND EXCESS FEES
 Calendar Year 2000
 (Continued)

Net Receipts		\$ 170,882
Less: Statutory Maximum	\$ 63,542	
Less: Training Incentive	<u>1,394</u>	<u>64,936</u>
Excess Fees		\$ 105,946
Less: Expense Allowance		<u>3,600</u>
Excess Fees Due County for Calendar Year 2000		\$ 102,346
Payments to County Treasurer - January 23, 2001	\$ 100,000	
Payments to County Treasurer - September 27, 2001	<u>2,346</u>	<u>102,346</u>
Balance Due at Completion of Audit		<u><u>\$ 0</u></u>

The accompanying notes are an integral part of the financial statement.

MERCER COUNTY
NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENT

December 31, 2000

Note 1. Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

A. Fund Accounting

A fee official uses a fund to report on the results of operations. A fund is a separate accounting entity with a self-balancing set of accounts. Fund accounting is designed to demonstrate legal compliance and to aid financial management by segregating transactions related to certain government functions or activities.

A fee official uses a fund for fees to account for activities for which the government desires periodic determination of the excess of receipts over disbursements to facilitate management control, accountability, and compliance with laws.

B. Basis of Accounting

The financial statement has been prepared on a modified cash basis of accounting, which is a comprehensive basis of accounting other than generally accepted accounting principles. Under this basis of accounting, certain receipts and certain expenditures are recognized as a result of accrual at December 31, 2000.

The measurement focus of a fee official is upon excess fees. Remittance of excess fees is due to the County Treasurer in the subsequent year.

C. Cash and Investments

At the direction of the fiscal court, KRS 66.480 authorizes the County Clerk's office to invest in the following, including but not limited to, obligations of the United States and of its agencies and instrumentalities, obligations and contracts for future delivery or purchase of obligations backed by the full faith and credit of the United States, obligations of any corporation of the United States government, bonds or certificates of indebtedness of this state, and certificates of deposit issued by or other interest-bearing accounts of any bank or savings and loan institution which are insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) or which are collateralized, to the extent uninsured, by any obligation permitted by KRS 41.240(4).

Note 2. Employee Retirement System

The county officials and employees have elected to participate in the County Employees Retirement System (CERS), pursuant to KRS 78.530 administered by the Board of Trustees of the Kentucky Retirement Systems. This is a multiple-employer public retirement system that covers all eligible full-time employees. Benefit contributions and provisions are established by statute. Nonhazardous covered employees are required to contribute 5.0 percent of their salary to the plan. The county's contribution rate for nonhazardous employees was 7.17 percent.

MERCER COUNTY
NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENT
December 31, 2000
(Continued)

Note 2. Employee Retirement System (Continued)

Benefits fully vest on reaching five years of service for nonhazardous employees. Aspects of benefits for nonhazardous employees include retirement after 27 years of service or age 65.

Historical trend information pertaining to CERS' progress in accumulating sufficient assets to pay benefits when due is present in the Kentucky Retirement Systems' annual financial report which is a matter of public record.

Note 3. Deposits

The County Clerk maintained deposits of public funds with depository institutions insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC). According to KRS 64.480(1)(d) and KRS 41.240(4), the depository institution should pledge or provide sufficient collateral which, together with FDIC insurance, equals or exceeds the amount of public funds on deposit at all times. In order to be valid against the FDIC in the event of failure or insolvency of the depository institution, this pledge or provision of collateral should be evidenced by an agreement between the County Clerk and the depository institution, signed by both parties, that is (a) in writing, (b) approved by the board of directors of the depository institution or its loan committee, which approval must be reflected in the minutes of the board or committee, and (c) an official record of the depository institution. These requirements were met, and as of December 31, 2000, the County Clerk's deposits were fully insured or collateralized at a 100% level with collateral of either pledged securities held by the County Clerk's agent in the County Clerk's name, or provided surety bond which named the County Clerk as beneficiary/obligee on the bond.

Note 4. Grant

The County Clerk received a local records microfilming grant from the Kentucky Department for Libraries and Archives in the amount of \$14,245. No Funds were expended during calendar year 2000. The unexpended grant balance is \$14,245 as of December 31, 2000.

Note 5. Leases

Commitments to the following lease agreements as of December 31, 2000 are:

<u>Item Purchased</u>	<u>Monthly Payment</u>	<u>Term of Agreement</u>	<u>Ending Date</u>	<u>Principal Balance December 31, 2000</u>
Copier	\$275*	60 Months	February 2004	\$10,460
Copier	\$ 68*	60 Months	April 2005	\$ 3,491
Copier	\$ 68*	60 Months	June 2005	\$ 3,724
Copier	\$ 77*	60 Months	February 2004	\$ 2,937
Computer Equipment	\$727	60 Months	January 2005	\$34,896

*These payments are adjusted on an annual basis for maintenance cost requirements.

MERCER COUNTY
NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENT
December 31, 2000
(Continued)

Note 6. Software License Agreement

The office of the County Clerk is committed to a software license agreement with Software Management, Inc., for the period of January 25, 2000 through January 31, 2005. The agreement requires an annual payment of \$5,325 (payable in monthly installments of \$425 for the first three months and \$450 for the following nine months). The total balance of the agreement is \$21,600 as of December 31, 2000.

REPORT ON COMPLIANCE
AND ON INTERNAL CONTROL OVER FINANCIAL
REPORTING BASED ON AN AUDIT OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENT
PERFORMED IN ACCORDANCE WITH GOVERNMENT AUDITING STANDARDS



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**Report On Compliance And On Internal Control
Over Financial Reporting Based On An Audit Of The Financial
Statement Performed In Accordance With Government Auditing Standards**

We have audited the Mercer County Clerk for the year ended December 31, 2000, and have issued our report thereon dated September 27, 2001. We conducted our audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in Government Auditing Standards issued by the Comptroller General of the United States.

Compliance

As part of obtaining reasonable assurance about whether the Mercer County Clerk's financial statement for the year ended December 31, 2000, is free of material misstatement, we performed tests of its compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, contracts, and grants, noncompliance with which could have a direct and material effect on the determination of financial statement amounts. However, providing an opinion on compliance with those provisions was not an objective of our audit and, accordingly, we do not express such an opinion. The results of our tests disclosed no instances of noncompliance that are required to be reported under Government Auditing Standards.

Internal Control Over Financial Reporting

In planning and performing our audit, we considered the Mercer County Clerk's internal control over financial reporting in order to determine our auditing procedures for the purpose of expressing our opinion on the financial statement and not to provide assurance on the internal control over financial reporting. Our consideration of the internal control over financial reporting would not necessarily disclose all matters in the internal control over financial reporting that might be material weaknesses. A material weakness is a condition in which the design or operation of one or more of the internal control components does not reduce to a relatively low level the risk that misstatements in amounts that would be material in relation to the financial statement being audited may occur and not be detected within a timely period by employees in the normal course of performing their assigned functions. We noted no matters involving the internal control over financial reporting and its operation that we consider to be material weaknesses.

Report On Compliance And On Internal Control
Over Financial Reporting Based On An Audit Of The Financial
Statement Performed In Accordance With Government Auditing Standards
(Continued)

This report is intended solely for the information and use of management and is not intended to be and should not be used by anyone other than the specified party.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ed Hatchett", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Edward B. Hatchett, Jr.
Auditor of Public Accounts

Audit fieldwork completed -
September 27, 2001